Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties **MHT No.** *B-4534*
Historic Bridge Inventory
Maryland State Highway Administration
Maryland Historical Trust

Name and SHA No. *Pennington Avenue Bridge (BC5217)*
Location:
Street/Road Name and Number: *Pennington Ave. over Curtis Creek*
City/Town: *Baltimore* ___vicinity
County: *Baltimore*

Ownership: __State __County _x_ Municipal __Other

This bridge projects over: __Road __Railway _x_ Water __Land

Is the bridge located within a designated district: __yes _x_ no
__NR listed district __NR determined eligible district
__locally designated __other
Name of District _____

Bridge Type:

__Timber Bridge
_Beam Bridge _Truss-Covered _Trestle _Timber-and-Concrete

__Stone Arch

__Metal Truss Bridge

_x_ Movable Bridge
_Swing _Bascule Single Leaf _x_ Bascule Multiple Leaf
_Vertical Lift _Retractile _Pontoon

__Metal Girder
_Rolled Girder _Rolled Girder Concrete Encased
_Plate Girder _Plate Girder Concrete Encased

__Metal Suspension

__Metal Arch

__Metal Cantilever

__Concrete
_Concrete Arch _Concrete Slab _Concrete Beam _Rigid Frame
_Other Type Name _____

B-4534

Description:

Describe Setting:

The Pennington Avenue Bridge is located in an industrial section of the outer harbor of Baltimore. It crosses Curtis Creek in an east-west direction. Views of the bridge are obstructed by I-695, the Baltimore Beltway, and Maryland Route 710. All roads in the immediate area are heavily traveled.

Describe Superstructure and Substructure:

The current Pennington Avenue Bridge is a steel, multibeam double leaf trunnion bascule. A trunnion bascule, or a simple bascule, as it is also sometimes called, is one in which the movable span swings upward around a central pivot at the center of rotation. Fenders built in the water at the corner of each movable span protect the spans from possible impact from ships passing through the channel. The overall length of the Pennington Avenue Bridge is 1,912 feet. There are 16 concrete approach spans in the westbound lanes and 15 in the eastbound lanes, as well as the main bascule span. The width of the roadway is approximately 66 feet. The length of the longest span is 317 feet. The roadway is surfaced with concrete and open steel grid over the draw span. There is no sidewalk. The main trunnion bearing housing is approximately 6 feet in height. The bridge was rebuilt in 1976.

Discuss major alterations:

Photographs of an earlier bridge, constructed in 1930-31, show it having four identical houses, one at each corner of the draw span. Early bridge engineers encouraged the construction of four houses, if there was room on the bridge, in the interest of symmetry. This symmetrical structure was replaced by the current bridge in 1976.

History:

When Built: 1976
Why Built: *To replace a former bridge.*
Who Built: *State Highway Administration*
Who Designed: *Zollman Associates*
Why Altered: *Unknown*
Was this bridge built as part of an organized bridge building campaign: *No.*

Surveyor Analysis:

This bridge may have NR significance for association with:

__A Events _B Person
__C Engineering/Architectural Character

Was the bridge constructed in response to significant events in Maryland or local history?

The current replacement bridge does not appear to have been constructed in response to any significant State or local events.

When the bridge was built and/or given a major alteration, did it have a significant impact on the growth and development of the area?

While its precise influence on the growth and development of Baltimore at the time of its construction is not known with certainty, it is presumed that an improved crossing at this point, with a capability to handle increased traffic loads, volumes, and speeds, would have had a positive impact on the city by facilitating the transport of goods and services.

Is the bridge located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation and would the bridge add to or detract from the historic and visual character of the possible district?

The Pennington Avenue Bridge is not in an area that currently appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The bridge has lost its integrity of setting with the construction of the Baltimore Beltway and MD Route 710. It would neither add to nor detract from any historic district that might be designated.

Is the bridge a significant example of its type?

The Pennington Avenue Bridge is one of only 20 bascule bridges remaining in Maryland. Bascule bridges currently are more common than other forms of movable bridges in Maryland. They were the earliest type of movable bridges, and although swing bridges, for a time gained precedence, bascule bridges garnered renewed interest with the development by the State Roads Commission of reinforced concrete bridges (Spero 1994). However, because it is less than 50 years old, the Pennington Avenue Bridge is not eligible for listing in the National Register.

Does the bridge retain integrity of the important elements described in the Context Addendum?

The Pennington Avenue Bridge retains its bascule span, its fender system, its dolphins, and its bridge tender's house.

Is the bridge a significant example of the work of the manufacturer, designer, and/or engineer and why?

The bridge is too recent to determine whether it is a significant example of the work of Zollman Associates.

Should this bridge be given further study before significance analysis is made and why?

No further study is required to determine that the bridge lacks historical significance.

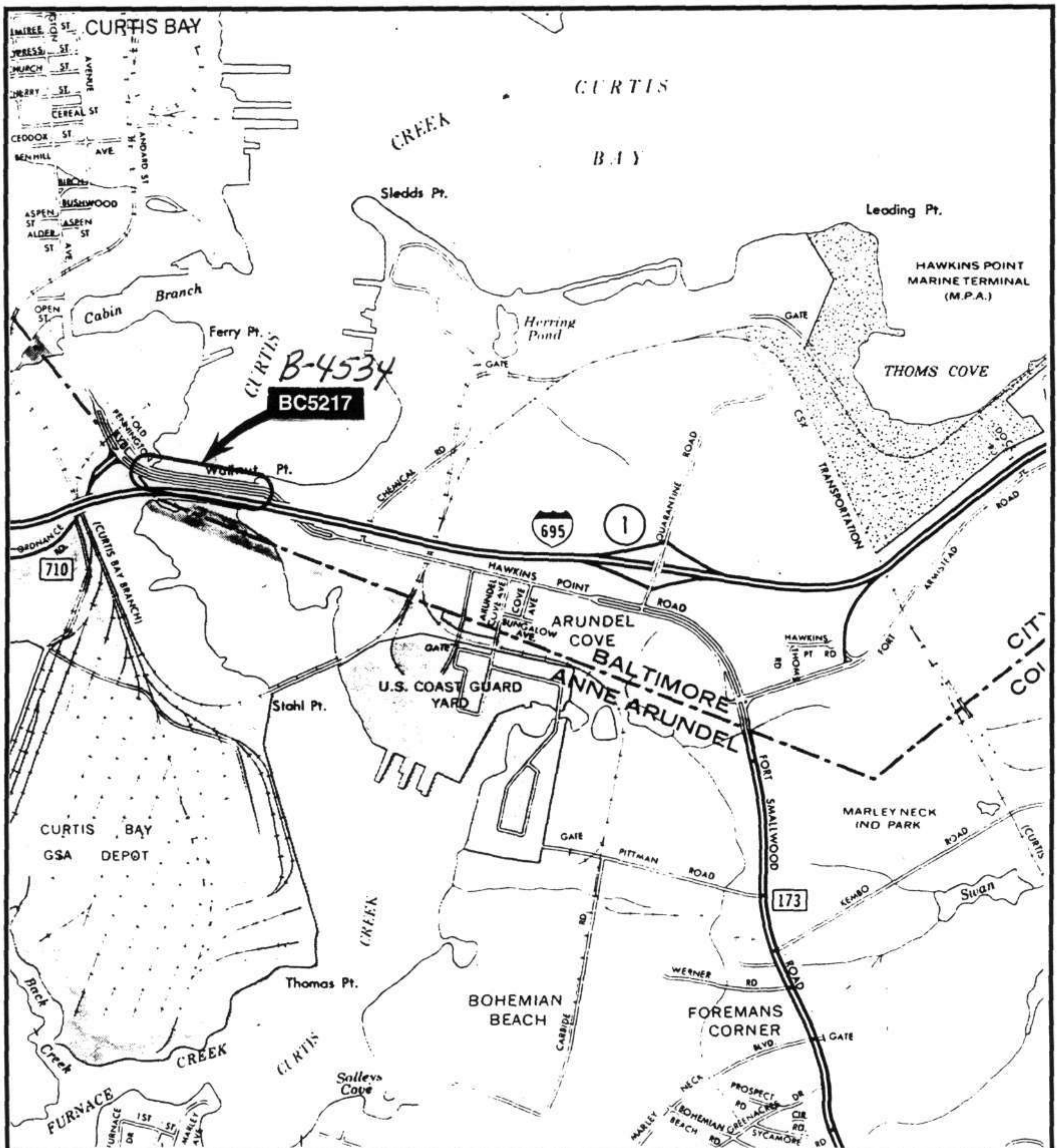
B-4534

Provide black and white prints and negatives and color slides of bridge, details, and setting labeled according to NR Bulletin 16A and Maryland Supplement to Bulletin 16A.

Provide a photocopy USGS map illustrating the location of the bridge.

Surveyor:

Name:	Alice Crampton/Julie Abell	**Date:**	12/9/94
Organization:	Parsons Engineering Science, Inc.	**Telephone:**	(703) 591-7575
Address:	10521 Rosehaven Street Fairfax, Virginia 22030-2899		

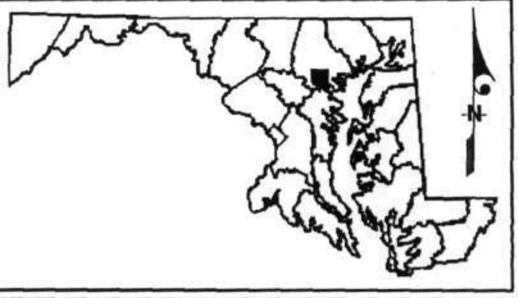


Baltimore City - Bridge Number BC5217

Pennington Avenue over Curtis Creek

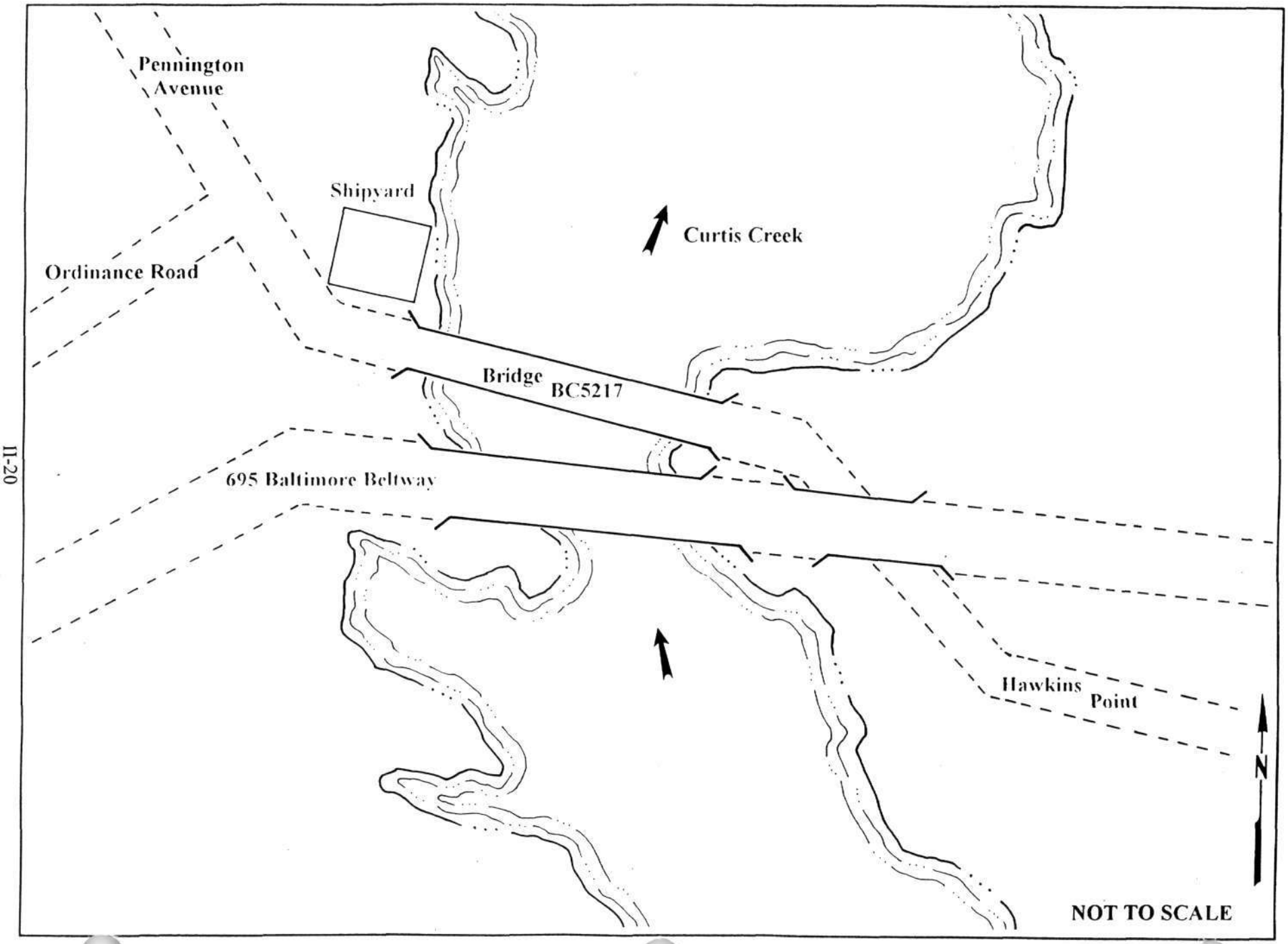
(Pennington Avenue Bridge)

B-4534



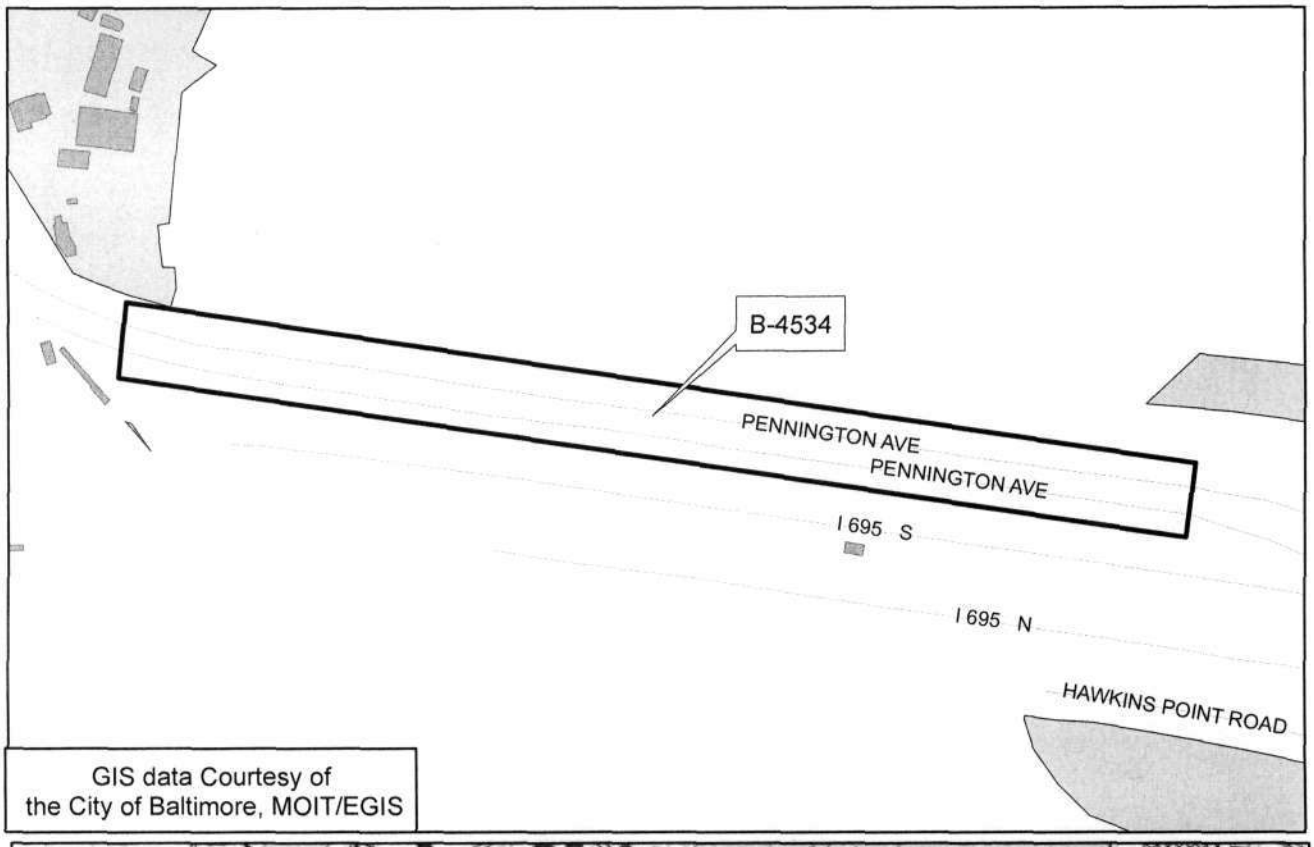
Scale 0 1000 2000 feet

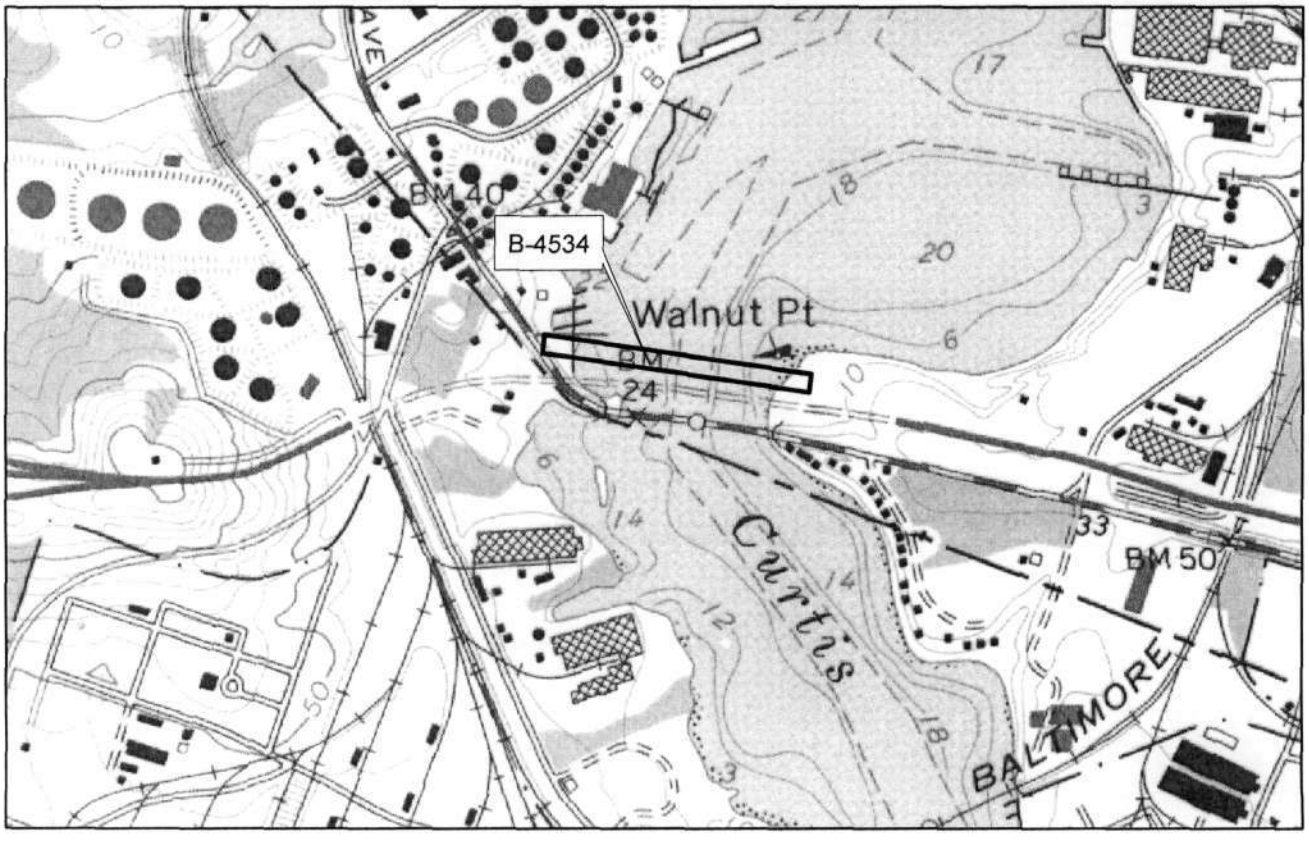
0 0.5 kilometer


Pennington Avenue
Shipyard
Curtis Creek
Ordinance Road
Bridge BC5217
695 Baltimore Beltway
Hawkins Point
N
NOT TO SCALE

B-4534

B-4534
Pennington Avenue Bridge (BC5217)
Pennington Avenue over Curtis Creek
Baltimore City
CUrtis Bay Quad





B-4534
Pennington Avenue Bridge (BC5217)
Baltimore County, Maryland
John Rutherford
7/95
Maryland State Highway Administration
South elevation (background)
1 of 5

B-4534
Pennington Avenue Bridge (BC5217)
Baltimore County, Maryland
John Rutherford
7/95
Maryland State Highway Administration
North elevation
2 of 5

B-4534
Pennington Avenue Bridge (BC5217)
Baltimore County, Maryland
John Rutherford
7/95
Maryland State Highway Administration
North elevation, drawspan detail
3 of 5

B-4534
Pennington Avenue Bridge (BC5217)
Baltimore County, Maryland
Julie Abell
12/94
Maryland State Highway Administration
Approach looking west
4 of 5

B-4534
Pennington Avenue Bridge (BC5217)
Baltimore County, Maryland
Julie Abell
12/94
Maryland State Highway Administration
Approach looking east
5 of 5